

**SUMMARY OF THE  
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2000**

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference at 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on September 14, 2000 in regular session. The meeting was led by Chair Dr. Charles Brokopp of the Utah Department of Health following the agenda distributed previously to Board members (Attachment A). The list of participants is shown in Attachment B, the new list of action items is given in Attachment C, and the cumulative list of action items is given in Attachment D.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Dr. Brokopp led the review of the draft minutes of the Board's August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Following discussion, they were approved with minor edits. Action items from the past meeting were reviewed and their status updated.

**DESCRIPTION OF PT DATABASE**

Dr. Brokopp introduced Mr. Tom Coyner of the Analytical Products Group (APG) who has developed a database for use by a NELAP accrediting authority to reliably manage data for laboratories, including their proficiency testing sample data. Mr. Coyner noted that design goals for the database have been to simplify NELAC-required tasks to promote consistency; it is available only to regulatory agencies. He reported that version 1.0 of the Accrediting Authority Management System (AAMS) has been completed in cooperation with New Hampshire and New Jersey, and has been installed in New Hampshire.

Board members expressed their interest in this tool, and a wide-ranging discussion ensued on its functional and operational capabilities and compatibilities. It was agreed that this should be demonstrated during the Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting to all actual and potential NELAP accrediting authorities. Dr. Billets will make the necessary logistical arrangements.

**INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY INSTITUTE**

Dr. Brokopp then introduced Mr. Jerry Parr who recapped the recent reorganization of the Global Institute of Environmental Scientists (GIES) resulting in a new organization named the International Laboratory Institute (ILI). Mr. Parr noted that ILI is organized with a broader scope than GEIS, and that it is registered with the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Considering the transition of NELAC from being fully-dependent on EPA support, he offered to explore with the Board ways that ILI might be helpful in the transition. A wide-ranging discussion ensued with a profitable exchange of ideas. Possible organizational structures that the group envisioned as suitable, as well as possible roles and responsibilities that might include:

1. approval of training courses/trainers for laboratory assessors,
2. approval of Proficiency Testing Oversight Bodies (PTOB), and
3. hotline for NELAC issues.

It was noted that the current NELAC scope does not allow for activities beyond standard setting, and some sort of mutually-agreeable arrangement might be helpful. It was noted that in addition

to the individual participating in both NELAC and ILI, contractual arrangements should reflect the wishes of the Board, should any relationship develop.

The Board requested Mr. Parr to draft a proposal for a subcommittee composed of Dr. Brokopp, Ms. Labie, and Dr. Kimsey to review prior to presentation to the full Board. It was agreed that proposals should be entertained from other interested groups.

#### **POLICY ON IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

Mr. Steve Arms of the NELAP accrediting authority working group, presented the issue of date of implementation of the NELAC standards to the Board. He noted that this issue is a pivotal one in ensuring reciprocity among accrediting authorities. There is a subcommittee drafting wording for presentation to the full working group; following discussion and consensus, they will be prepared to present their findings to the Board.

#### **PROPOSED MEETING WITH HENRY LONGEST**

In preparation for the Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC VIi), the Board discussed arranging a meeting with Mr. Henry Longest, who is scheduled to be the keynote speaker at the opening plenary session. The purpose of the meeting is to coordinate efforts and to update Mr. Longest on the status of NELAC's transition planning. It was agreed that Dr. Brokopp will request a meeting late Monday.

#### **REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION**

##### **Regulatory Coordination Committee**

It was noted that a committee member has left the employ of a regulatory agency, resigning his position on the committee as a voting member, and a request has been received to reappoint the person as a contributor. It was agreed that a reasonable amount of experience should be gained when one moves from the public sector to the private, or vice versa, before it be deemed appropriate for such a change in status. Hence, it was agreed that:

1. Dr. Brokopp will not make the requested appointment,
2. Ms. Hankins will draft a policy to address this and future such events, and
3. Dr. Brokopp will request that Dr. Kircher nominate other candidates for the committee.

##### **On-site Assessment Committee**

A new committee member has been appointed to fill the remaining year of Steve Baker's term. The chair requested an appointment for six years (one year replacement + five year normal term). It was agreed that at the appointment will be for one year; at its end, a request for exemption will be entertained to allow the member then sit for a full five year term.

##### **PT Committee**

The chair of the Proficiency Testing Committee requested extension of a member's term by one year to allow continuity while continuing the search for a long term replacement. Following discussion of the issues, the Board affirmed the appointment.

##### **POTENTIAL NEW NELAP AA (MINNESOTA)**

Ms. Mourrain reported that she has received a request from Minnesota on NELAC issues,

indicating their progress towards becoming a NELAP accrediting authority.

#### **SOLICIT SECONDARY ACCREDITING AUTHORITIES**

Discussion of this issue was postponed for a later meeting, pending discussions of the NELAP accrediting authority working group.

#### **ELAB PBMS SUBCOMMITTEE**

This subcommittee, chaired by Harry Gearhart, has met and is preparing a presentation for the opening plenary of NELAC 6i. The subcommittee plans to expand its next teleconference to include NELAP accrediting authorities and EPA regional lead assessors in order to better characterize both the status and difficulties of the PBMS effort, and to develop an understanding of how NELAC can best interact with the committee.

#### **AARB REPLACEMENT MEMBER**

Ms. Hankins noted that nominations for members of the NELAC Accrediting Authority Review Board (AARB) are needed; there have been resignations and additional members to be added. Several possible candidates were discussed and others were suggested. She will consult further with the Board before making the final appointments (per 1.6.3(c)).

#### **AMERICAN LABORATORY ARTICLE**

The article "*National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program and the Issue of Small Laboratories*" which appeared in American Laboratory (v 32, no. 17) was discussed. It was noted that New York has provided a quality manual template for use by small laboratories, and it has been well received. Considering that the opinion expressed differs from the experience of many NELAC stakeholders, there was a consensus that a letter of response would be in order. Mr. Parr and several Board members will collaborate on a response, reflecting their experience and observations.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **NELAC 6i Hotel Reservations**

Ms. Hankins reported that in negotiations with the Riviera for meeting and sleeping rooms, there has been an underestimation in specifying the sleeping room block. Currently, the hotel has adequate rooms for 10/31 - 11/1 but all rooms are sold out for subsequent nights. She suggested that NELAC participants contact the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority at 702-892-0711 should they need addition nights' lodging.

##### **Accreditation Fees for Stacktesters**

It was noted that in discussions of the MSE subcommittee of ELAB, the stacktesters have indicated that they want a single accreditation fee that is applicable in all States. Since this differs from the current implementation of the NELAC standard, Ms. Hankins has invited Office of Air representatives to participate in a future meeting of the NELAP accrediting authority working group to explore the issues.

##### **ISO Negotiations**

Ms. Hankins reported that negotiations continue. Several options appear available, but each has

issues to be resolved.

### **Cosponsor for Interim Meetings**

Some organizations have expressed an interest in co-sponsoring interim meetings, in the same manner that the annual meetings are co-sponsored by the States. Following discussion, it was agreed that Ms. Sample would draft a proposal for Department of Defense to co-sponsor the Seventh NELAC Interim Meeting.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of this Board and committee chairs is scheduled for October 12, 2000 at 1:30 p.m. EDT.

**NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
DRAFT AGENDA  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2000**

1. Approval of Minutes of August 10, 2000, Meetings\* - *Chuck Brokopp*
2. Description of PT database - *Tom Coyner*
3. International Laboratory Institute\* - *Jerry Parr*  
**S** Offer to work with NELAC in capacity of nonprofit organization
5. Policy on Implementation Date - *Steve Arms*
6. Proposed meeting with Henry Longest - *Jeanne Hankins*
7. Request for exemption - *Jeanne & Chuck*  
**S** Regulatory Committee\*  
**S** On-site Assessment Committee  
**S** PT Committee
8. Potential new NELAP AA (Minnesota) - *Jeanne*
9. Solicit secondary accrediting authorities - *Jeanne*
10. ELAB PBMS subcommittee - *Steve Billets*
11. AARB Replacement member - *Jeanne*
12. American Laboratory Article\* - *Jeanne*
13. New Business

**NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2000  
PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Address</b>
Brokopp, Charles Chair	UT Department of Health	T: (801) 584 - 8450 F: (801) 584 - 8486 E: cbrokopp@doh.state.ut.us
Allen, Ann Marie	MA Dept. of Env. Prot.	T: (978) 682 - 5237 F: (978) 688 - 0352 E: ann.marie.allen@state.ma.us
Arms, Steve (invited guest)		
Billets, Steve Exec. Secy, Acting	USEPA/ORD	T: (702) 798 - 2232 F: (702) 798 - 2261 E: billets.stephen@epa.gov
Coyner, Tom (invited guest)	Analytical Products Group	
Hankins, Jeanne Director	USEPA/ORD	T: (919) 541 - 1120 F: (919) 541 - 4261 E: hankins.jeanne@epa.gov
Jackson, Ken (invited guest)		
Kimsey, Paul	CA Department of Health Services	T: (510) 540 - 2411 F: (510) 540 - 3075 E: pkimsey@dhs.ca.gov
Labie, Sylvia	FL Dept. of Environmental Protection	T: (850) 488 - 2796 F: (850) 922 - 4614 E: labie_s@dep.state.fl.us
Parr, Jerry (invited guest)		
Pearson, James (absent)	VA Div. of Consolidated Lab Services	T: (804) 786 - 7905 F: (804) 371 - 7973 E: jpearson@dgs.state.va.us
Rhyne, Anne	TX Natural Resource Conserv. Comm.	T: (512) 239 - 1291 F: (512) 239 - 6410 E: arhyne@tnrcc.state.tx.us
Sample, Jackie	US Navy/US Dept of Defense	T: (843) 764 - 7337 F: (843) 764 - 7360 E: SampleJH@navsea.navy.mil
Slayton, Joe	USEPA/Region 3	T: (410) 305-2653 F: (410) 305-3095 E: slayton.joe@epa.gov
Tatsch, Gene (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: (919) 541 - 6930 F: (828) 628 - 0659 E: <a href="mailto:cet@rti.org">cet@rti.org</a>

Item No.	Action	Status
1	Dr. Billets will make the necessary logistical arrangements so the APG can demonstrate the Accrediting Authority Management System at NELAC VIi.	
2	Mr. Parr will draft a NELAC-ILI proposal for Dr. Brokopp, Ms. Labie, Dr. Kimsey to review prior to presentation to the full Board.	
3	Dr. Brokopp will request a meeting with Mr. Longest late Monday, 10/31/00.	
4	Ms. Hankins will draft a policy to address change of status (Voting - Contributor) of a committee member.	
5	Dr. Brokopp will request that Dr. Kircher nominate other candidates for the Regulatory Coordination committee.	
6	Mr. Parr, Drs. Jackson & Brokopp, and Ms. Labie will draft a response to the American Lab article.	
7	Ms. Sample will draft a proposal to the Board for Department of Defense to co-sponsor the Seventh NELAC Interim Meeting.	

**ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS  
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2000**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
04/13/2000	Dr. Jackson, and Dr. Kimsey will provide a short summary of recent Accrediting Authority workgroup teleconferences to Ms. Hankins to be included in the materials for the next board meeting. (Will be an on-going item).	On-going
01/11/1999	Committee Chairs are to prepare "Frequently Asked Questions" for posting on the NELAC Website. They are to submit these to the Membership and Outreach Committee.	On-going
09/23/1999	Dr. Jackson will draft a policy for responding to future offers of NELAC-associated activities at national meetings.	On-going
01/18/2000	Ms. Hankins will seek clarification on USEPA's NELAC staffing plans.	Clarification requested; awaiting response
01/18/2000	Dr. Jackson will update a mailing list and finalize a letter to encourage participation in NELAC committees.	Completed
	Board members will place follow-up calls to recipients as needed.	On-going
05/04/2000	The Membership and Outreach committee will draft a policy addressing the logistics of web-submitted issues: routing, response, etc.	On-going
05/04/2000	Barb Burmeister will Email the PT committee's process for responding to nominations to Jeanne Hankins.	On-going
05/08/2000	Dr. Brokopp will explore organizational issues with ECOS.	Ongoing
7/26/00	Dr. Brokopp will continue to lead exploration of viable options, including financial issues.	Ongoing
7/13/00	Board members to forward names of persons to fill Board vacancy.	Ongoing
7/13/00	Ken Jackson will inform NELAP accrediting authorities of Board's decision to: 1. announce primary accreditations of NELAP-accredited laboratories the first week of 2001, and 2. Announce secondary accreditations thereafter.	Completed.  Followup: AAs to inform their labs
7/13/00	Chuck Brokopp will draft thank you note to Robbie Roberts of ECOS for his assistance.	In progress

**ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS  
NELAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2000**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
7/13/00	The Program Policy and Structure Committee is tasked with developing specific draft wording of a reorganized NELAC at NELAC 6i.	Ongoing
8/10/00	Mr O'Neil will send a meeting agenda to Ms. Hankins who will share it with the NELAC Board.	Completed
8/10/00	Ms. Allen, Ms. Labie, and Dr. Brokopp will draft a plan, based on the most recent work by the transition committee, for submittal to EPA	Ongoing
8/10/00	Board members are to identify suitable candidates for the vacant Board position	
8/10/00	Each committee liaison is to identify the three most important issues for their committee at NELAC 6i: Dr. Brokopp will remind committee chairs.	
8/10/00	Dr. Tatsch will forward the list of NELAC representatives, and the revised directory, as soon as final checking of the database is complete.	Final quality checks in progress

